



# Focus on **Upper Humptulips River**

Southwest Regional Office - Water Quality Program

## **Ecology seeks comments on draft plan to reduce temperature in the Upper Humptulips River**

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) and partners have completed a draft of the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) that identifies strategies to reduce water temperatures, and to protect and restore critical habitat in the Upper Humptulips River. The DIP was developed with input from private timberland managers, the Quinault Tribe, state and federal agencies, and the Chehalis Basin Partnership's water quality committee.

The plan addresses the Upper Humptulips River – from the Highway 101 Bridge to the headwaters in the Olympic National Forest. Since 70 percent of this watershed is owned and managed by the US Forest Service and the remaining 30 percent is primarily owned by private timber companies, these two entities are responsible for most of the actions needed to reduce temperature. These activities are already detailed in the Northwest Forest Plan and the Forest and Fish Agreement.

On the few non-forested mixed-use lands, several entities share an interest in seeing improvements in water quality, soil conservation, and habitat restoration. Voluntary cooperation is the main approach to manage these issues.

You are invited to comment. You may review the draft Detailed Implementation Plan at **these locations**:

- **Hoquiam Timberland Library, 420 Seventh St.**
- **Humptulips Grocery**
- **<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0310042.html>**

Please send comments by June 18, 2003 to:

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### **Background**

The Humptulips River Watershed has been actively managed by humans for over 100 years. Land use in the Upper Humptulips is predominantly silviculture, including commercial forest owned by Rayonier. Some valley bottomland in the extreme lower watershed consists of small farms.

The headwaters of the Humptulips River originate in the steep Olympic Mountains in the Olympic National Forest. The streams then flow into gradually broadening glaciated river valleys. Salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat trout are present in the Upper Humptulips watershed. Significant fish-bearing streams within the watershed include the East Fork Humptulips and West Forks Humptulips mainstems and key tributaries (Goforth Creek, Flatbottom Creek, Donkey Creek, Chester Creek).

A partnership of private timberland managers, the Quinault Tribe, and state and federal agencies evaluated the condition of the East Fork and West Fork Humptulips River Watersheds. Water quality sampling indicates that temperatures in the river system exceed state water-quality standards. Although high water temperatures are the primary concern, sediment in the river and loss of spawning and rearing habitat are also of concern.

Ecology sets water quality standards to protect the beneficial uses, such as swimming, fishing, and fish and wildlife habitat, associated with surface waters of the state (lakes, rivers, wetlands, etc.). Increased temperatures can reduce the quality of habitat for salmon, steelhead, and trout. Typical causes of increased temperatures include roads, riparian vegetation removal, and channel widening as well as timber harvest in sensitive areas outside the riparian zone.

### **Water Cleanup Plan process**

Federal law requires states to identify sources of pollution in waters that fall short of water quality standards, and to determine how much pollution needs to be reduced for the water body to remain healthy. Using the source and pollution reduction information, Ecology and landowners developed strategies for achieving the necessary reduction or elimination of pollution. The result was a water cleanup plan or Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL). The Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) outlines specific actions and responsible parties. The next step is to gather comments to finalize the DIP.

***For more information contact Craig Graber at 360-407-6299***

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